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Boozman Bulletin: Why I Oppose Military Intervention in Syria

There is no doubt that the suffering inflicted upon the Syrian people who are caught in a civil war to free their country from a brutal, authoritarian regime calls for a response from the international community. Confirmation that Bashar Assad's regime used a nerve agent against civilians, killing over a thousand in the process, defines the gravity of the situation. The use of chemical weapons, banned by international law for nearly 100 years, is a crime against humanity. There certainly is a need for world powers to intervene.

But what level of U.S. response is appropriate?

For weeks, President Obama has been making the case that the only way to assert U.S. power is to send the regime a message with a unilateral, punitive response. He still appears to be keeping that option on the table regardless of what our allies, Congress and the American people think.

However, there may still be a diplomatic answer. A plan for Syria to relinquish its chemical weapons, initiated by Russia and agreed to by Syria, has the potential to take these weapons of mass destruction out of Assad's hands. While we should be skeptical of any deal between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Assad, a deal Putin now appears to be hedging, the U.S. needs to pursue every diplomatic avenue.

It is important to see if we can resolve this issue through diplomatic efforts.

The people of Arkansas have spoken loudly, and almost universally, in opposition to President Obama's request to authorize a U.S. military strike against Syria. They remain unconvinced that military force is the only way to resolve this issue or that it would successfully prevent Assad from further brutal attacks on civilians. It only takes one look at Libya, which is in complete chaos, to see that it's very difficult to get untangled once you

are involved in this type of conflict.

The American people are weary of becoming involved in another U.S. military engagement. In the weeks since the President first proposed a military strike against Assad's regime, the majority of Americans have become more convinced that the President lacks a plan to accomplish his goals. Many have become more concerned in that time that these goals aren't even well defined.

Without a clear path forward, I agree with them and continue to oppose the use of military force in Syria.

Watch and read some of the interviews we've done about Syria.

KASU - [Boozman discusses Syria, and reflects on 9/11](#)

40/29 - [Why Sen. Boozman says he'll vote no on Syria](#)

Magnolia Reporter - [Sen. Boozman thinks this is the wrong time to strike Syria](#)

Hot Springs Sentinel-Record [Boozman skeptical on action in Syria](#) (subscription required)

Arkansas Democrat Gazette - [Hoping Obama listens, say 5 Arkansans in Congress](#) (subscription required)

Quick Takes:

- **Obamacare Implementation:** I am supportive of repealing and defunding Obamacare, but right now we don't have the support we need in the Senate to pass this. In the meantime I have cosponsored legislation to delay the individual and employer mandates, included in Obamacare, until 2015. I also cosponsored the [Union Bailout Prevention Act](#) that would prevent the administration from granting union requests for special subsidies.
- **Arkansas Agriculture:** During the August work period, [I traveled across the state](#) meeting with family farmers, facility managers, agriculture researchers and others who make their living growing, processing, and securing our supply of food and fiber. Washington's decisions on agriculture policy will have a dramatic effect on our state's economy. As part of my [annual Ag tour](#) I heard a lot about the [Farm Bill](#). I'm grateful to have been chosen to [serve on the conference committee](#) that will hammer out differences between the Senate and House passed versions of the bill into a compromise bill that would be able to pass both chambers and be signed into law.
- **Troop Pay Raise:** President Obama recently announced he would cap the pay raise for our troops at one percent instead of the congressionally-mandated 1.8 percent. [We need to rein in spending but not on the backs of our men and women](#) in the Armed Forces who stand in defense of our freedom.

- **Rural Veterans' Health:** Our veterans living in rural areas deserve accessibility to quality health care. We need a clear path forward to provide these men and women with the care they need, no matter where they live. I am happy to join Minnesota Senator Al Franken in [introducing legislation to improve veterans' health care in rural areas](#).
- **Federal Spending:** The fiscal year begins October 1st and Congress hasn't passed appropriations bills so we have to rely on passing a continuing resolution to fund the government. We will work to [rein in spending and reduce the growth of government](#) so we can continue to provide the necessary services and continue our efforts to cut back on wasteful programs that are abusing taxpayer dollars.
- **In Defense of Prayer:** In October, the Supreme Court will hear a case involving prayer at public meetings. *Town of Greece, NY v Galloway* is a landmark case concerning religious liberty. We recently joined some Senate colleagues in [filing a friend-of-the-court brief](#) arguing that the Court should reaffirm the Constitutionality of legislative prayer.
- **Promoting Religious Freedom:** Violence in Egypt against Coptic Christians cannot be tolerated. As a cosponsor of S. 653, the *Near East and South Central Asia Religious Freedom Act*, I support bringing this bill to the Senate Floor to [demonstrate our commitment to religious freedom](#).
- **IG legislation:** Hardworking Arkansans are stretching their dollars, cutting back and reining in their budgets. Washington needs to do the same thing. We're working to find additional avenues to help us save taxpayer dollars. That's why I [introduced legislation to speed up filling vacant Inspectors General positions](#). IGs enable Congress to improve programs, conduct thorough oversight, and reduce waste of taxpayer dollars.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** Arkansas is the recipient of federal funds to help improve the infrastructure. Last week the Department of Transportation [approved funding for Highway 92](#). Earlier this summer [airports across the state were notified of grant funds](#) to improve their facilities.
- **Friday Mobile Offices:** On Friday my staff will host Mobile Office events in Independence County and Woodruff County. We will be in Batesville beginning at 9:30 a.m. and Augusta at 1:30 p.m. [Click here](#) to learn more about these constituent service events.



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